A test system (for example, software located at one of the nodes 10 in the communications network 1), which may be an automated software service, creates a Java mobile agent, associates this with a SIP message, and sends that SIP message to one of the SIP clients 11 in the group. The Java mobile agent executes on the receiving SIP client and sets up one or more test sessions. The results of these test sessions are stored by the Java mobile agent in its private data, together with any other required information. The Java mobile agent then associates itself with another SIP message and arranges that this SIP message be sent to another SIP client in the group. When the SIP message reaches another SIP client the process of obtaining information is repeated so that more information is added to the Java mobile agent's private data. Another SIP message is used to send the Java mobile agent on to another SIP client and so on, until all the SIP clients in the group have been visited. Once all the SIP clients in the group have been visited by the Java mobile agent, this agent associates itself with a SIP message in order to be sent back to the originating SIP client. The Java mobile agent may also be arranged to initiate other actions to fix any faults that it finds as it finds them.

In the Claims

Amend claims 21 through 23 as follows:

21.   (Amended) A communications network node as claimed in claim 20 wherein said processor comprises a Java virtual machine.